

Millom Urban Sanitary District.



Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health.



*Summary of action taken during the year ending
December 31st, 1908, to prevent the
spread of disease.*



Scarlet Fever.—Thirteen cases. All but one were removed to the Isolation Hospital. In addition nine cases were received from the Rural District. Two cases were reported from St. George's Terrace, and were removed to the Hospital at once. I could not trace the source of infection, no one in the house had been from home by train, and no visitors had been to the house by train. The next case was reported on December 16th, from a farm on the boundary between the Rural and Urban Districts. I visited this farm with Dr. Cass, the Medical Officer of Health for the Rural District, and we thought we traced the infection to an entertainment at the Central Hall. Then we had two cases in the Urban District, of boys in the same form at school as the above. Then an isolated case in a private house, which I could not trace.

A careful enquiry has been made into the milk supply, and all dairies selling milk to infected houses have been visited, but no trace of infection could be found. I do not know if the schools have yet been inspected by the Medical Officer appointed by the County Council, for it is possible that some infected child may be going to school.

Diphtheria.—Five cases: Two deaths. In only one case was anti-toxin serum used, the patient recovering. No defective drains could be found, the different cases appeared at long intervals, and at different parts of the District.

Erysipelas.—Two cases. No deaths.

Enteric Fever.—Three cases. One death. No sanitary defects were found, they were probably sporadic in their origin, though a very large question has been opened by the report of certain cases which seem capable of causing this disease for many years. In fact, it seems that a Typhoid case may at certain times of the year infect milk and other articles of food for a very long time.

Enteritis and Diarrhœa.—Two cases. Both under one year of age. One death.

Measles.—We had from 50 to 60 cases of a mild type. Schools were closed and disinfected; in the future the duty of closing the schools will fall upon the Education Medical Officer appointed by the County Council. I visited St. James's School and examined the children present. I could find none with measles, but as children when home from school were allowed to mix with children from infected houses, very little could be done to prevent the spread of disease.

Whooping Cough.—No cases.

Influenza.—No deaths.

Puerperal Fever.—One death. There are five midwives registered under the Midwives Act, but they do not attend a large number of cases without a medical man.

Infant Mortality.—Twenty-four: Five from premature birth, seven from pneumonia, one from measles, two diarrhœa, two atrophy, three tuberculosis diseases, two convulsions, two "other causes."

The Notification of Births Act, 1907, has not been adopted.

Tuberculosis. — The Local Government Board has now instructed their Medical Officer to report all cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis to the Medical Officer of Health for the District ; this is no doubt a movement in the right direction, especially when two different men hold the appointments, but in our case, as I hold both offices, this is of little use. Some years ago the medical men in the District were asked to report such cases to the Medical Officer of Health, without a fee, but not one has ever been so reported. It will be well to consider if this should not be made compulsory. The total number of deaths from Tubercular Disease during the year was 17, or 1.7 on the population. We have no hospital accommodation within the District, but some suitable cases are sent to the Cumberland Sanatorium.

Zymotic Disease caused seven deaths : three less than last year and eight less than the year before, or .7 per 1000, the least we have ever had during the past 35 years.

Water Supply continues very good, being upland surface water, is pure and of ample quantity. No water is now used for drinking purposes except from the Council's mains. The District lies between high hills and the estuary of the River Duddon, and is about one mile on its outer side from the sea, into which the drainage is carried. The soil is clay, with a good sub-soil of sand and gravel.

The great majority of the inhabitants are iron-ore miners and blastfurnacemen ; the house accommodation is more than sufficient for the demand, there being now over 150 houses empty in the district, while five new ones were built during the year. The total number available for separate tenements is 2018.

No action has been taken under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, and none is needed.

A faint, light-colored watermark of a classical building with four columns and a triangular pediment is visible in the background.

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Milk Supply.—This has been carefully gone into during the year, all Dairies (16) and Cow Houses (10) within the District having been inspected. I found the air-space per cow in these houses varied from 204 feet per cow with 13 cows, to 600 feet with two cows. As a rule the air-space and ventilation was good, except in cases where the cow-houses were under the barns, then it was bad. In my opinion the air-space is of less importance than good ventilation and plenty of room behind the cows, with good drainage therefrom. About 60 per cent. of the milk supplied within the District is obtained from cow-houses outside our area, and which I have no right to inspect. In any Act dealing with the subject this should be remedied. We receive no foreign milk, but foreign and English milk should both be passed to the consumer on the same conditions.

No tubercular milk has been found.

Other Foods.—My attention has not been called to any diseased meat, or the unsanitary condition of premises where food is stored, and no action has been taken or needed under the Sale of Foods and Drugs Act (section 117) of the Public Health Act, 1875.

Common Lodging Houses, Slaughter Houses, Bakhouses, within the District have been inspected during the year, and any nuisance or defect at once reported to the owner and occupier, and as a rule at once attended to.

Duddon Port.—Notices have been received from time to time from the Local Government Board, stating Ports abroad where there were cases of Plague and Cholera, and the attention of the Custom House Officer has been called to these Ports, but we have no vessels arriving from such ports and no action has been required. I propose if any such case should occur, to utilize the Small Pox Hospital, containing 8 beds, which stands by itself far from any inhabited house and near the Port, and which has never been used for any purpose.

Schools.—Public Elementary.—The sanitary condition is good and the water is supplied from the Council's Mains.

County Medical Officer of Health.—A Medical Officer for the County of Cumberland has now been appointed, and I send him once a month a return of all cases of Infectious Diseases in my District, and he sends me a return of all such cases in the County, this is helpful as it may enable me to trace cases of infection to their source.

Excrement.—Water Closets are now all over the District, the sewers are flushed as required and discharged into the estuary of the River Duddon near the sea.

Removal and Disposal of House Refuse is carried out by the Council's own men and is very satisfactory, the removals for the year were 23,102.

Sewerage and Drainage is complete in all parts of the District, and is under constant supervision, all defects when found being at once made good.

Pollution of Rivers.—None.

Nuisances.—House to house inspection is carried out systematically. Notices are served without delay to remove defects, or abate nuisances, and in most cases little difficulty is found in this being done.

- 14 Yard Drains cleared and repaired.
- 4 Water Closets cleared and repaired.
- 3 Yards paved and relaid.
- 2 Slopstone Pipes lengthened.
- 3 New Gullies substituted for defective ones.
- 3 Removals of duck and hen pens from back yards.
- 3 Removals of pig stuff from wash-houses.
- 3 Pig Styes found in a filthy condition.
- 2 Styes drained and 1 removed.



Notification of Disease.—Scarlet Fever 13, Erysipelas 2, Enteric Fever 3, Diphtheria 5, total 23, the same as last year. Disinfectants have been supplied gratuitously in every case reported, and house, clothing, bedding, etc., fumigated or sent to the steam disinfecter, which has been used 11 times during the year.

The School Attendance Officer and the Librarian have received early notice of each case.

Isolation Hospital receives cases from the whole of the Bootle Union, with an acreage of 91,188, and a population of 16,727, and is worked by a Joint Committee of Bootle Union, Rural Council, and Millom Urban Council ; it supplies a long felt want in South Cumberland, and is much appreciated by the Medical Officers of the Union, and it has no doubt been of considerable value in preventing the spread of disease. The Hospital stands in its own grounds of about three acres at a good distance from any inhabited house. Twenty-one cases of Scarlet Fever were admitted during the year. Eight from the Rural, and 13 from the Urban District. One death occurred from the Rural District 48 hours after admission, four were discharged cured, and three are still in the Hospital. Two cases from the Urban District were discharged cured, and 11 remain in the Hospital. Two cases of Enteric Fever were admitted, one from the Rural and one from the Urban District, both discharged cured. One case of diphtheria was received from the Rural District and discharged cured.

Factory and Workshops Act.—These have all been inspected in the ordinary course, and the Inspectors report that they were all clean, and in Sanitary condition.

Deaths Registered 108. One from outside the District, or 10.80 per 1000, the lowest death rate for the past 35 years. Children under one year, 23, one more than last year, 3 over 60 years, 7 over 70, 3 over 80, 2 over 90.

Births, 242 or 24.20 per 1,000, an increase of 2, but still a large decrease on 1906.

Reports have been sent in to the Council every four weeks during the year, showing the Births and Deaths, and percentage of same, the number of infectious cases reported, and the work done during that time, and calling their attention to anything of a special nature.

I enclose herewith the usual Tables of Statistics.

(Signed) **P. B. STONEY,**
Medical Officer of Health.

4th February, 1909.

